

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BAGHDA 00900 021839Z

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ACTION NEA-07

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E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, IZ

SUBJECT: US-IRAQI ISSUES (II) ARMS

REF: A) BAGHDAD 898

B) BAGHDAD 340, PARA 4

C) BAGHDAD 472

D) BAGHDAD 560

E) BAGHDAD 769

1. SUMMARY IF IRAQI POSITION ON ISRAEL APPEARS MULE-HEADED TO US. ADAMANT US REFUSAL TO SELL MILITARY TECHNOLOGY AND WEAPONRY TO IRAQ APPEARS MEAN-SPIRITED TO GOL. IRA INTEREST IN US ARMS IS BOTH REAL AND REASONABLY SPECIFIC. AN OFFER OF AT LEAST PARTIAL ACCESS TO US ARMS TECHNOLOGY, COUPLED WITH A SYMPATHETIC PRESENTATION ON THE PRINCIPAL DIVISIVE ISSUE--PALESTINE SHOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO MOVE US-IRAQ POLITICAL RELATIONS OUT OF THEIR CURRENT, STERILE IMPASSE.
END SUMMARY

2. IRAQ HAS A STRONG INTEREST IN PROCURING AMERICAN MILITARY TECHNOLOGY AND ARMAMENTS. WE KNOW THIS FROM REPEATED REPORTS FROM THE BRITISH MILITARY ATTACHE IN BAGHDAD AS WELL AS FROM A NUMBER OF PRIVATE SECTOR IRAQIS WHO HAVE CLEARLY BEEN AUTHORIZED BY GOI MINDEF TO EXTEND FEELERS. USINT HAS REPORTED THIS INTEREST IN REFTELS B THROUGH E AND CALLED AS EARLY AS LAST MAY (REF D)
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PAGE 02 BAGHDA 00900 021839Z

FOR LONG OVERDUE REVIEW OF BASIC POLICY ON MILITARY SALES TO

IRAQ. IN ABSENCE OF ANY SUBSEQUENT WASHINGTON GUIDANCE, HOWEVER, USINT HAS GIVEN NO RPT NO ONE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT 1967 ARMS POLICY HAS CHANGED.

3. IRAQ IS ALREADY BUYING ROUGHLY AS MUCH WESTERN MILITARY TECHNOLOGY (REF C) AS IT IS FROM COMERCON COUNTRIES AN AMAZING RAPID TURNABOUT. THIS IS CLEARLY PART OF IRAQ'S EMRGING POSTURE OF NON-ALIGNMENT AND OF THE LEADERSHIP'S RESOLVE TO BE DEPENDENT ON NO ONE OSURCE OF SUPPLY. GOI'S MILITARY GOALS ARE INTERNAL SECUTIRY, BORDER AND MOUNTAIN REGION SURVEILLANCE AND A CREDIBLE DEFENSIVE DETERRENT AGAINST SYRIAN AND IRAN.

4. GOI PROBLBLY TAKES IT FOR GRANTED THAT A NECESSARY CONDITION FOR U.S. MILITARY PURCHASES IS RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. IF THEREFOR, GOI WERE GIVEN RESON TO BELIEVE E.G. IN COURSE OF FORTHCOMING TALKS AT UNGA THAT IMPROVED POLITICAL RELATIONS COULD LEAD TO ACCESS AT LEAST TO U.S. DEFENSIVE WEAPONRY AND ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE DEVICES, THEN GOI WOULD HAVE FIRM BASIS FOR FURTHER POLITICALDIALOG WITH USG.

5. APART FROM ARMS AND MILITARY TECHNOLOGY, THERE IS NOTHING THAT IRAQ NEEDS SO BADLY FROM THAT IT HAS TO BITE THE BULLTET OF RENEWED DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS IN ORDER TO GET. TRADE, FOR EXAMPLE IS BOOMING. THERE IS NO LIMITATION ON IRAQI ACCESS TO CIVILIAN AMERICAN TECHNOLOGY, CAPITAL EQUIPMENT OR CONSUMER GOODS. IRAQJS OPPOSITION TO US POSITIONS ON OIL, ENERGY AND RAW MATERIALS IS NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO JUSTIFY ITS STUBBRON REFUSAL TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS. THE MAIN STUMBLING BLOCK IS NOT BILATERAL. IT IS PALESTINE. AND WHILE A US OFFER OF AT LEAST LIMITED ACCESS TO MILITARY TECHNOLOGY WOULD NOT OF ITSELF BE ENOUGH TO TIP THE SCALES, SUCH AN OFFER WHEN COUPLED WITH A SKILLFUL PRESENTATION ON PALESTINE, (REF A) SHOULD BE SUFFICIENTLY ATTRACTIVE TO GOI TO OVERCOME CURRENT INERTIA IN OUT POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP AND ALLOW MOVEMENT TOWARDS MORE CONSTRUCTIVE AND SUBSTANTIVE POLITICAL DIALOG.

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